

CCM PERMEATED WITH FALSE CHRISTS AND FALSE GODS

Enlarged January 31, 2013 (first published August 4, 2011) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

A pastor who wrote to criticize me for my warning about West Coast Baptist College's adaptation of contemporary worship music said that if my position is right and that if we should stop using CCM because of the heresies of the writers, we should also stop using the old Protestant hymns, such as those by Martin Luther, Charles Wesley, and Fanny Crosby, and we should also stop using the King James Bible, because it was written by Anglicans.

Whatever doctrinal differences a Baptist would have with Martin Luther or John Wesley or Fanny Crosby or KJV translator John Rainolds, we share the same Christ and the same God, but that is often not true for Contemporary Christian Worship.

Contemporary worship music has transformational power that no Protestant hymn has. We are comparing apples that have some non-deadly skin disease to apples laced with arsenic. I've never heard of a fundamental Baptist church that was transformed into a Lutheran church through singing Luther's hymns or a Methodist church by singing Fanny Crosby's songs, but I've personally witnessed many fundamental Baptist churches transformed into New Evangelical rock & roll emerging churches through the power of contemporary worship. (See the free eVideo presentations "The Transformational Power of Contemporary Praise Music" and "The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music," available at www.wayoflife.org.)

One reason for the transformational power is that the world of contemporary worship is a terribly dangerous world filled with gross heresies and false christs, and those who play with the music build bridges to this world.

Many of the influential Contemporary Christian Worship (CCW) artists worship **A NON-TRINITARIAN GOD**. Geron Davis, Joel Hemphill, Mark Carouthers, Phillips, Craig and Dean, Lanny Wolfe, and others are "Jesus Only" Pentecostals who deny the Trinity. To deny the Trinity is to worship a false God.

Other CCW artists worship **A NON-VENGEFUL GOD**. Stuart Townend, for example, who writes "modern hymns" popular in IB churches, denies that God is vengeful, which is a brazen rejection of the very God of the Bible (Stuart Townend, "Mission: Worship, The Story Behind the Song", <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdVQNYQmdM4>).

A great many of the CCM artists worship **A NON-JUDGMENTAL GOD**. Consider the popularity of *The Shack*. It has been directly endorsed by Michael W. Smith and many other

CCM artists and has been well received in prominent CCM circles such as Calvary Chapels, Vineyard churches, and Hillsong. It was promoted at the 2009 National Pastor's Convention in San Diego, which was sponsored by Zondervan and InterVarsity Fellowship. Young was one of the speakers and a survey found that 57% had read the novel. Young was enthusiastically received, and in an interview with Andy Crouch, a senior editor of *Christianity Today*, there was not a hint of condemnation for his false god. Crouch is a CCM musician in his own right and led one of the praise and worship sessions in San Diego.

The Shack is all about redefining God. It is about a man who becomes bitter at God after his daughter is murdered and has a life-changing experience in the very shack where the murder occurred; but the God he encounters is most definitely *not* the God of the Bible.

Young says the book is for those with "a longing that God is as kind and loving as we wish he was" (interview with Sherman Hu, Dec. 4, 2007). What he is referring to is the desire on the part of the natural man for a God who loves "unconditionally" and does not require obedience, does not require repentance, does not judge sin, and does not make men feel guilty for what they do.

In that same interview, Young said that a woman wrote to him and said that her 22-year-old daughter came to her after reading the book and asked, "IS IT ALRIGHT IF I DIVORCE THE OLD GOD AND MARRY THE NEW ONE?"

This is precisely what a very large portion of the Contemporary Christian Music crowd is doing.

Young admits that the God of "The Shack" is different from the traditional God of Bible-believing Christianity and blasphemously says that the God who "watches from a distance and judges sin" is "a Christianized version of Zeus."

This reminds me of the modernist G. Bromley Oxnam, who called the God of the Old Testament "a dirty bully" in his 1944 book *Preaching in a Revolutionary Age*.

Young depicts the triune God as a young Asian woman named "Sarayu" * (supposedly the Holy Spirit), an oriental carpenter who loves to have a good time (supposedly Jesus), and an older black woman named "Elousia" (supposedly God the Father). God the Father is also depicted as a guy with a ponytail and a goatee. (* The name "Sarayu" is from the Hindu scriptures and represents a mythical river in India on the shores of which the Hindu god Rama was born.)

Young's god is the god of the emerging church. He is cool, loves rock & roll, is non-judgmental, does not exercise wrath toward sin, does not send unbelievers to an eternal fiery hell, does not require repentance and the new birth, puts no obligations on people. (See "The Shack's Cool God" at the Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.)

The false CCM non-judgmental, universalistic god is represented by emerging church leaders such as Brian McLaren and Rob Bell, both of whom are very popular with CCM artists. One Christian rocker told us that these writings “resonate” with him.

McLaren calls the God who punished Jesus on the cross for man’s sin “a God who is incapable of forgiving, unless he kicks somebody else” (McLaren, <http://www.understandthetimes.org/mclarentrans.shtml> and http://str.typepad.com/weblog/2006/01/brian_mclaren_p.html). He presents the traditional God of the Bible as a tyrant who “gets his way through coercion and violence and intimidation and domination. McLaren says that the “power of the blood” gospel “raises some questions about the goodness of God.”

Rob Bell, author of the influential book *Velvet Elvis*, claims that the God who would allow multitudes to go to eternal hell is not great or mighty (*Love Wins*, location 1189-1229). He says that such God is not loving and calls the preaching of eternal hell “misguided and toxic.” He says there is something wrong with this God and calls Him “terrifying and traumatizing and unbearable” (*Love Wins*, location 47-60, 1273-1287, 2098-2113). He even says that if an earthly father acted like the God who sends people to hell “we could contact child protection services immediately” (*Love Wins*, location 2085-2098).

One of Bell’s supporters, Chad Hotlz, a Methodist pastor, calls the God who sends unbelievers to hell “the monster God” (“Who’s in Hell?” FoxNews, March 24, 2011).

It is obvious that Bell and company worship a different God than the One we worship in “traditional” Baptist churches.

Bell’s God is more akin to New Age panentheism than the God of the Bible. He describes God as “a force, an energy, a being calling out to us in many languages, using a variety of methods and events” (*Love Wins*, location 1710-1724).

“There is an energy in the world, a spark, an electricity that everything is plugged into. The Greeks called it *zoe*, the mystics call it ‘Spirit,’ and Obi-Wan called it ‘the Force’” (*Love Wins*, location 1749-1762).

Bell worships a false christ. His Jesus is “supracultural ... present within all cultures ... refuses to be co-opted or owned by any one culture ... He doesn’t even state that those coming to the Father through him will even now that they are coming exclusively through him ... there is only mountain, but many paths. ... People come to Jesus in all sorts of ways ... Sometimes people use his name; other times they don’t” (*Love Wins*, location 1827-1840, 1865-1878, 1918-1933).

Rob Bell is popular among contemporary worship musicians. Consider David Crowder, one of the most influential names in contemporary worship. In October 2010 the David Crowder Band hosted Rob Bell at the Fantastical Church Music Conference at Baylor University. Big name contemporary worship artists Jars of Clay and Matt Redman joined hands in this heretical

venture. In January 2012, Crowder led worship for the send-off of Rob Bell at Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, Michigan ("Rob Bell Received a Tearful Farewell," *Christian Post*, Jan. 9, 2012). Many other examples could be given. Whatever christ Rob Bell worships is a christ that resonates with many within the contemporary worship movement.

Many of the CCM artists worship **A REBEL CHRIST**, which is certainly a false christ. Mark Stuart of Audio Adrenaline says, "Jesus Christ is the biggest rebel to ever walk the face of the earth" (*Pensacola News Journal*, Pensacola, Fla., March 1, 1998, pp. 1, 6E). Sonny of P.O.D. says, "We believe that Jesus was the first rebel; the first punk rocker" (<http://www.shoutweb.com/interviews/pod0700.phtml>). This is absolute blasphemy. The Bible says rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (1 Sam. 15:23). A rebel is a lawbreaker, but Christ was the lawgiver who He came to earth to fulfill the requirements of His own law (Mat. 5:17-19). Christ was not crucified for rebellion; He was crucified for testifying that He is God (John 10:33).

Many of the CCM artists worship **A ROCK & ROLL PARTY CHRIST**. In his *Live ... Radically Saved* video Carman says, "Jesus is always cool; He's got his thing together." In *Resurrection Rap* Carman portrays Jesus as a street hippie; in *The Standard* he calls Jesus "J.C."; and in *Addicted to Jesus* he speaks of "Jammin' with the Lamb." Petra claims that "God gave rock and roll to you/ Put it in the soul of every one." In "Party in Heaven" the Daniel Band sang, "The Lamb and I are drinkin' new wine." Phil Driscoll says, "God is the King of Soul; He's the King of all rhythm" (quoted by Tim Fisher, *Battle for Christian Music*, p. 82). Messiah Prophet Band says, "Jesus is the Master of Metal," and Barren Cross says, "Better than pot, Jesus rocks." John Fischer described God as puffing on a cigar and swaying to rock music (*CCM Magazine*, July 1984, p. 20), while J. Lee Grady says Jesus enjoys dancing with the angels and "grooving to the sound of Christian R&B pumped out of a boom box" (*Charisma*, July 2000).

The cover of Rapper Jayceon "Game" Taylor's 2012 album, *Jesus Piece*, features Jesus portrayed as a gang member, complete with a gaudy gold chain and a tattoo on his face. Taylor isn't a CCM artist. He is a secular rapper, but his philosophy is no different than that of many of the "Christian" rockers and rappers. Taylor is inventing a "Jesus" in his own likeness. He says, "Last year in August I got baptized [at City of Refuge Church in Gardena, California] and so I've been going to church, but I still been kinda doing me out here. I still love the strip club and I still smoke and drink. I'm faithful to my family, so I wanted to make an album where you could love God and be of God, but still get it poppin' in your life" ("Jesus Portrayed as Gang Member," *Christian Post*, Oct. 24, 2012). Taylor says his new album is intended to encourage those who "love God but are still street and wanna remain themselves." To the contrary, the Bible says that the true Christian is "a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Baptism itself is a picture of dying with Christ to the old sin life and being raised to an entirely new life of holiness.

The party-dude Jesus is a false christ that has been created by those who have created a Jesus after their own image, but it is not the Jesus we see in Scripture.

Jesus is indeed a friend of sinners. He is the very Greatest Friend of sinners! His love for sinners drew Him from the joys unspeakable of Heaven to the wretchedness of this earth, where He was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, but Jesus was not some sort of “party animal.” He wasn’t worldly cool in any sense. In fact, the sinners he “hung with” the most were not party people. They were merely not very high on the societal rung and were outcasts by the religious elite. Jesus disciples were not party dudes. There is no evidence that Jesus’ close friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were party people. When they were with Jesus, it wasn’t party-hardy time; it was time to be discipled.

“And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word” (Luke 10:39).

The Jesus we see in Scripture ate with sinners and spent time with the lowest of society (as well as the highest), but He was not any sort of party dude. He warned all men to repent and “go and sin no more” and spent a lot of time describing the horrors of Hell and warning men in the sharpest language not to go there.

The following type of preaching would put a halt to any party!

“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5).

“And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell” (Matthew 5:30).

The Lord Jesus didn’t come to earth to play games, and though He *might* have played games, that is never what we see Him doing in the inspired Scripture, and anything beyond Scripture is mere vain speculation. Jesus came to earth to fulfill a specific, very solemn purpose and He was singleminded in His pursuit of that purpose. The Samaritans were offended because He wouldn’t spend time with them, but it was because He had no time for anything other than accomplishing His task (Luke 9:51-53). When He was with His disciples, He was busy preparing them for His departure (John 16:4).

Jesus was here to defeat the works of Satan. He didn’t sit around and goof off after the fashion of this present entertainment-crazed generation. He had too much to do and too short a time to do it in. He had three short years of public ministry, and it was packed. He came to preach the gospel and to teach about the kingdom of God, and that is how He occupied His time, whether publicly or privately. That is what we see in Scripture.

CONCLUSION

The fact that the CCM crowd typically worships a different kind of God than the “old-fashioned” Biblicist, is why they are perfectly comfortable using music that has been identified as sexy by the secular world.

“... that is what rock is all about--sex with a 100-megaton bomb, the beat” (Gene Simmons of KISS, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

Note that Simmons was not referring to the words of rock music; he was referring to the music itself and particularly to its backbeat rhythm.

Music researchers Daniel and Bernadette Skubik, in their study on the neurophysiology of rock music, warned:

“Whether the words are evil, innocuous, or based in Holy Scripture, the overall neurophysiological effects generated by rock music remain the same. There is simply no such thing as Christian rock that is substantively different in its impact” (“The Neurophysiology of Rock,” an Appendix to John Blanchard’s *Pop Goes the Gospel*, pp. 187ff).

The reason that statement doesn’t bother a CCM defender is because he sees Jesus as a rock & roll party Dude who loves a good time.

“Those who envision God as a special friend, a kind of lover, with whom they can have fun, see no problem in worshipping him by means of physically stimulating music. On the other hand, those who perceive God as a majestic, holy, and almighty Being to be approached with awe and reverence will only use the music that elevates them spiritually” (Samuele Bacchiocchi, *The Christian and Rock Music*).

Those are mix the holy Rock Jesus Christ with the unholy rock of this world are worshipping a false god.

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